

We claim:

- 1 1. A method comprising:
2 providing an offer, via an interface at a vending machine, for a benefit in
3 exchange for an email address;
4 receiving, via the interface at the vending machine, an email address; and
5 after receiving the email address, transmitting a promotional message to the
6 received email address, in which the promotional message includes
7 a code that is redeemable for a benefit at the vending machine.
- 1 2. The method of claim 1, in which receiving, via an interface at a vending
2 machine, an email address comprises:
3 receiving a plurality of email addresses via the interface at the vending
4 machine.
- 1 3. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
2 validating the received email addresses.
- 1 4. A method comprising:
2 providing an offer, via an interface at a vending machine, for a benefit in
3 exchange for an email address;
4 receiving, via the interface at the vending machine, an email address; and
5 after receiving the email address, transmitting a promotional message to the
6 received email address, in which the promotional message includes
7 a message promoting the vending machine.
- 1 5. The method of claim 4, in which receiving, via an interface at a vending
2 machine, an email address comprises:
3 receiving a plurality of email addresses via the interface at the vending
4 machine.

2 6. The method of claim 4, further comprising:
3 validating the received email addresses.

1 7. A method comprising:
2 receiving a set of email addresses;
3 identifying at least one vending machine to be associated with the set of
4 email addresses;
5 determining at least one rule defining restrictions on when a message may
6 be sent to at least one of the email addresses; and
7 sending a message via email transmission to each of the set of email
8 addresses in compliance with the restrictions on when a message may be sent,
9 in which the message includes content that promotes the vending
10 machine.

1 8. The method of claim 7, in which sending a message via email transmission
2 to each of the set of email addresses comprises:
3 sending the message to a predetermined address;
4 determining whether approval has been received; and
5 sending a message via email transmission to each of the set of email
6 addresses only if approval has been received.

1 9. The method of claim 7, further comprising:
2 receiving data representing a preference of a customer;
3 determining an email address from the set of email addresses that
4 corresponds to the customer;
5 determining a second message according to the preference; and
6 sending the second message via email transmission the email address that
7 corresponds to the customer.

1 10. The method of claim 7, further comprising:
2 generating a promotion for the vending machine; and
3 in which the step of sending a message comprises:
4 accessing a database of consumer preferences;
5 determining, from the database, a set of recipients that have
6 preferences corresponding to the promotion; and
7 determining a respective email address for each of the set of
8 recipients; and
9 sending a message via email transmission to each of the respective
10 email addresses, in which the message indicates the promotion.

1 11. The method of claim 10, in which generating a promotion for the vending
2 machine comprises:
3 generating a promotion for the vending machine based on at least one
4 revenue management factor.